

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 DHA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-07
ACDA-10 /109 W

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P R 061631Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8459

INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 19643

GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS, DECEMBER 4,5,6

1. THE WEEKEND PAPERS REPORT THAT RHODESIA AND MOZAMBIQUE ARE MOVING RAPIDLY TOWARDS A STATE OF OPEN WAR, AND THERE IS A SUGGESTION THAT THE U.S. SHOULD HELP BRITAIN TO AVOID A BLOOD BATH. MONDAY'S PAPERS SAY THAT IAN SMITH'S RETURN TO THE CONFERENCE IS EXPECTED TO MARK ITS TURNING POINT, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

2. SUNDAY TELEGRAPH SALISBURY CORRESPONDENT CHRISTOPHER MUNNION: "RHODESIA AND MOZAMBIQUE ARE MOVING RAPIDLY TOWARDS A STATE OF OPEN WAR AMID CLAIM AND COUNTER-CLAIM OF AGGRESSION AND CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THEIR ARMIES."

3. SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE BY ANTHONY PEARSON: "LAST WEEK,
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THE (MOZAMBIQUE) MINISTRY OF INFORMATION FELT IT NECESSARY FOR THE THIRD TIME IN A MONTH TO DENY THAT HALF OF MOZAMBIQUE HAD BEEN TAKEN BY THE GUERRILLAS OF...THE ZIMBABWE PEOPLE'S ARMY.... (PRESIDENT) MACHEL SEEMS TO FEAR THAT THE SOVIET UNION MAY BE TEMPTED TO TURN THE GUERRILLAS AGAINST HIS WEAKENED FRELIMO ARMY AND OVERTHROW HIM. AND HE MAY BE CONVINCED THAT ANY EARLY VICTORY IN RHODESIA IS THE ONLY WAY HE CAN REMOVE THE GUERRILLA THREAT."

4. TIMES (SATURDAY) EDITORIAL: "THE DECISION TO OFFER A BRITISH ROLE IS FRAUGHT WITH RISK AS THE CABINET...MUST KNOW. THEY HAVE RIGHTLY KEPT IT VAGUE AND CONTINGENT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE (GENEVA) CONFERENCE.... WHETHER MR. CARTER WOULD SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO JOIN (A) PRAESIDIUM OR GOVERNOR-GENERAL-IN-COUNCIL CANNOT YET BE KNOWN. BUT JUST AS SANCTIONS WERE ENFORCED BY MANDATORY SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION, SO SHOULD THE INSTRUMENT FOR TRANSFER OF POWER BE ENDORSED BY THE UN.... BRITAIN CANNOT SEND TROOPS. EVENTUALLY SOME SUCH ROLE FOR THE UN AS IT UNDERTOOK...IN THE CONGO...MAY HAVE TO BE THE REQUIRED PRICE FOR BRITISH PARTICIPATION."

5. GUARDIAN (SATURDAY) EDITORIAL: "IF THE BLOOD BATH WHICH IS SO WIDELY FORESEEN FOR RHODESIA BEFORE INDEPENDENCE OR FOR ZIMBABWE AFTERWARDS CAN BE PREVENTED IT IS MOST LIKELY TO BE PREVENTED BY A COMBINATION OF UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC AND PHYSICAL INFLUENCE. BUT THAT IS TRUE ONLY AS LONG AS SUSPICIONS OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT ARE TEMPERED BY THE PRESENCE ALSO OF FORCES FROM NEIGHBORING ENGLISH-SPEAKING AFRICAN STATES. THE MAJOR BRITISH AND WESTERN INTEREST IN RHODESIA COINCIDES WITH THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE ON THE SPOT: A PEACEFUL TRANSITION AND A STABLE, AND REASONABLY

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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 DHA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-07

ACDA-10 /109 W

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P R 061631Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8460

INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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DEMOCRATIC, STATE THEREAFTER. IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE THESE AIMS. TRIBAL AND PERSONAL RIVALRY MAY PROVE TOO GREAT. THE INFLUENCE OF MOZAMBIQUE, WHENCE THE GUERRILLAS MAINLY OPERATE, MAY CONDEMN THE COUNTRY FIRST TO A CIVIL WAR AND THEN TO THE EMERGENCE OF YET ANOTHER DISMAL MARXIST REPUBLIC. BUT UNTIL THAT FATE IS SEALED BRITAIN AND AMERICA SHOULD DO EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO FORESTALL IT."

6. FINANCIAL TIMES SALISBURY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL HOLMAN (MONDAY): "THE ARRIVAL THIS WEEK IN GENEVA OF MR. IAN SMITH...IS LIKELY TO BRING THE RHODESIAN CON- SE TO A HEAD. (HIS) CLAIM THAT THE SETTLENIH PRO- POSALS PUT FORWARD BY...KISSINGER REPRESENTED A TAKE-IT- OR-LEAVE-IT CONTRACT WILL BE PUT TO THE TEST.... PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY MR. SMITH AND HIS MINISTERS HAVE LEFT NO ROOM FOR MANEUVER ON PROPOSALS WHICH HAVE BEEN REJECTED UNCLASSIFIED

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BY...NATIONALIST LEADERS IN GENEVA AND IT IS THOUGHT THAT IF THIS IS TO BE THE ISSUE (INTERIM ADMINISTRATION) ON WHICH THE CONFERENCE COLLAPSES, MR. SMITH WISHES TO BE THERE."

7. TIMES GENEVA CORRESPONDENT: "THE RETURN HERE...OF... SMITH IS EXPECTED TO MARK A TURNING POINT ONE WAY OR THE OTHER IN THE RHODESIAN CONFERENCE."

ARMSTRONG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS SUMMARIES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LONDON19643
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760450-0605
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761270/aaaaciko.tel
Line Count: 168
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: wolfsd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAY 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <09 AUG 2004 by wolfsd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS, DECEMBER 4,5,6
TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006